External Affairs works out to 282 (both India-based and local employees).

(b) All our Missions/Posts abroad, perform a wide range of functions in political, economic, commercial, consular, cultural, information, science & technology and other spheres with a view to promoting and safeguarding, India's overall national interest. This also applies to India's Missions/Posts in the erstwhile Soviet Union.

(c) India has signed a wide range of bilateral agreements with the countries of the former Soviet Union with a view to further strengthening the overall bilateral ties. Treaties of Friendship and Cooperation have been signed with the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Armenia.

New Strategy to be Indian Missions to Lure Foreign Investments

180. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the new strategy to be pursued by our Indian Missions abroad for attracting foreign investments as Match makers to focus on identified core sectors, as reported in The Hindu dated 9th June, 1997, under the caption "new strategy to lure foreign investment";

(b) the details of the framework and the module to develop trade and economic linkages; and

(c) in what way the new strategy is likely to be an improvement in the existing framework to secure direct foreign investments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERWANI): (a) The experience of only a small percentage of approved foreign investment proposals transforming into actual investments has been attracting the attention of this Ministry also. It has been felt that approved foreign investment proposals need post approval monitoring. Ministry of External Affairs is working towards this objective through our Missions abroad who play a key role in keeping in touch with the foreign investors and facilitating implementation of their approved proposals through various stages. The Missions also act as 'match makers' where possible or necessary.

(b) Our Missions abroad have been taking increasing interest in promoting trade and economic relations. There is special focus on developing trade links with countries in SAARC, South-East Asia, Asia-Pacific, Central Asia, the Gulf, Africa and Latin America. In the field of foreign investments, an "escort service" is proposed to be provided through the apex chambers to major investors.

(c) Due to a liberalized economic environment in India there is ample interest on the part of foreign business houses to invest in India as evidenced by the number of applications and approvals. however, actual investment inflows are not yet to levels the Government would like to have. This is mainly due to unfamiliarity of procedures on the part of investors. Our effort is to ease this problem so that the foreign investor who is ready to invest does not shy away and is informed and guided properly till the actual implementation of the project.

Ratification of Chemical Weapons Convention

181. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has recently ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) without Pakistan having done so;

(b) if so, the reasons for India's fretting away too much too soon at CWC;

(c) in what manner India would retain its security options and not surrender its deterrent security options at any stage; and

(d) whether Government would ensure Parliament that there would not be any